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MORAL, INSTRUCTIVE AND AMUSING

TOY BOOKS.

MARY RICHMOND;

A

DAY IN THE LIFE

OF A

SPOILED CHILD.

NEW HAVEN.

PUBLISHED BY S. BABCOCK.

1841.

Amalia F. Thorbergs Exemplar, Leipzig 1842

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EMBELLISHED WITH SIXTEEN BEAUTIFUL ENGRAVINGS.

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MARY RICHMOND:

A DAY IN THE

LIFE OF A SPOILED CHILD.

Mary Richmond, a little girl between eight and nine years of age, was the only child of a lady and gentleman, who, having been obliged to leave their home when she was too young to travel with them, had left her for nearly two years in charge of a nurse-maid. This nurse-maid was extremely fond of the infant, and had shown that fondness in a very foolish manner; for she allowed Mary to have her own way in every thing, and, consequently, by the time her parents came home, the little miss had become a rude, cross girl, who liked her own way better than any thing or any body else in the world.

Mrs. Richmond was much grieved when she found her little daughter possessed of such a disagreeable and unhappy disposition. She determined at once to take proper measures to correct the faults of her education. She therefore, in the first place, sent away Mary's foolish nurse-maid, and gave her daughter to the care of Susan Shipley, who had more sense, telling her to take every pains to cure Mary of her bad habits, and to refuse her every thing which it was not proper she should have; and she especially charged Susan not to let her

have her own way, when it was not right for her to do as she pleased.

Susan was very kind and obliging to the little girl; but she was, also, faithful to the commands of Mrs. Richmond, and firm in her determination to allow Mary only such indulgencies as were proper for her.

One morning, when she went to call Mary from her bed, she drew aside the curtains and said, "Come, Miss Mary, it is time to rise; your father and mother are both up."

"I can't get up yet," said Mary.

"Then I must leave you," said Susan, as she went towards the door.

"No, no; you must not leave me," cried Mary; "I don't like to be left."

"Will you get up then, Miss?" inquired Susan.

"Yes, if you'll lift me out of bed," said Mary, "and put on my stockings and shoes, and wash me, and comb my hair, and brush it smooth."

"Your mamma says you must learn to wait upon yourself, Mary," said Susan.

"But it's too much trouble to wait upon myself," said Mary, "and as I'm a young lady, I ought to be waited on; so, Susan, you *must* dress me."

"Oh, Mary! *must* is not a word for you to use; pray get up and I will help you to dress, for I should be sorry if your father and mother were to find you in bed when they come up stairs."

Finally Mary got out of bed, and then she said to Susan, "I want my shoes and stockings."

"Here they are," said Susan.

Mary put them on, for she found that Susan did not mean to do it for her. When she was ready to wash, she put her hand into the basin, but the next minute drew it back again, saying, "Oh! the water is so cold; I must have warm water."

"No, Mary," said Susan; "you know that you must not have warm water; your mamma wishes you to use cold water, because it is more healthy. Come, don't be afraid of a little cold water, it will make your cheeks glow, and your papa will say when he sees you,—come Mary, let me kiss that rosy cheek."

But Susan could not persuade Mary to like the cold water; she cried and pouted, and at last sobbed out, "I don't like you at all, Susan; you are not half as good to me as Sarah was; she used to let me have warm water, and every thing else that I liked."

"And so would I, Mary, if it was my duty, and if it was right for me to let you have your own way; but I must obey the orders of your mamma; she says you must use cold water. I should be very much to blame, if I were to give you warm water."

"But how would mamma know any thing about it," said Mary, "if I did not tell her?"

"I should be doing just as wrong, whether your mamma knew it or not," said Susan. "I hope you do not think you are not wrong, because your fault is not known."

Mary blushed and looked down, for she did know it was wrong to deceive, even if she should not be found out, for her mamma had taken particular pains to make her understand that every kind of deception is as sinful as telling an untruth. She knew, also, that she would be disobeying her kind parent, in thus acting contrary to her express commands, and she felt ashamed of her conduct; therefore she washed in the cold water, without any more words, and finally finished dressing herself, with Susan's help, just as her papa came into the room to bid her good morning, and to see if she was ready for breakfast.

After breakfast, Mary went into the garden with Susan to see if any of the plants had come out of the ground, for it was quite early in the spring, and Mary had heard her mamma say, that in a few days the grass and the flowers would be springing up, and that the beauties of spring would soon take the place of the dreary scenes of winter. The morning was pleasant, though the air was rather chilly, for it was yet early; but they did not mind it much at first; they walked up and down the long walks, and Susan pointed out to Mary where the flowers would come up, and where some of the early plants were just peeping above the ground. She also showed her the trees that would bear fruit,—the peach, the apple, the pear, and the blue plum.

"But," said Mary, "I do not see any flowers; show me some; mamma said last week that they would be up in a few days, and I am sure it is time now."

"No, Mary, it is not quite time yet," said Susan; "the weather is too cold. A few days more of warm sun-shine, and they will be peeping forth. But come, let us go into the house; you have no shawl on, and the air is too chilly for you to be out any longer. I am afraid I have permitted you to stay here too long already."

"I don't want to go in yet; I am not cold, and I want to go down to the arbor at the bottom of the garden," said Mary.

"Well, then wait till I can bring your shawl and bonnet," said Susan.

"No, I am not cold, I tell you," replied Mary, angrily, "and I won't wait." With these words she turned to run, but stumbled over a stick that

lay in her path, and fell flat on her face. Susan ran and helped her up, tenderly inquiring if she was hurt. The foolish girl put her apron to her face and burst into tears, but refused to answer; she was not hurt, however, and her tears were caused by anger and vexation more than pain.

Finding all her endeavors to obtain an answer from the wilful child, of no use, Susan took hold of her hand and led her into the house. As Mary offered no resistance, she took her into the nursery, and seated her in a chair by the table, and then left her to recover from her angry fit at her leisure.

After Susan had been gone some time, Mary began to feel rather lonesome and foolish. She knew she had done wrong, and had ill-treated her kind maid; but she was too stubborn to go and tell her so. With no very pleasant feelings, she tried to pass away the time with her toys; she took up her doll and dressed and undressed it; then she dressed it again, putting on one of its new hats,—of which

she had three,—one after the other, in order to see which looked the best. It was a beautiful doll, and had been given her as a birth-day present, by her aunt Caroline, only a few weeks before. Mary was delighted with her doll, as most little girls usually are, and she had spent many pleasant hours in playing with it. But this morning it afforded her no satisfaction. She could neither take pleasure with her doll or any thing else. She was discontented with every thing she did, and every thing she attempted to do. She had commenced the day by doing wrong, and, what was worse than all, she would not acknowledge her faults and strive to behave better. How much unhappiness did the poor foolish child cause herself. How much pain, and shame, and unpleasantness might she have spared herself, and how much mortification to her kind father and mother, had she endeavored to be a dutiful and obedient child.

Throwing her doll carelessly down on the table, she got out her work-box and determined to fit a new cap to one of its bonnets. But all would not do; she was still too cross and unhappy to be able to set about any thing calmly, or with any satisfaction. At last, rising up in a passion because her scissors did not happen to be in the box, she pushed back the table so violently that it was overturned, and doll, work-box, needle-work and all, were scattered about the floor. Her father and mother heard the noise and came in to see what was the matter.

"Why, Mary," said her father, "what does all this mean? How came the table upset?"

Mary looked first at her father, then at her mother, and then at her poor broken doll, and burst into tears.

"What is the cause of all this?" asked her papa, "and of your tears."

"Why, papa," said she, "I pushed the table back, not very hard, and it turned over."

"Surely a slight push from your hand could not overset a table like that," said Mr. Richmond. "But where is Susan? and how came she to leave you here alone?"

"Why, papa, she brought me in here, and then left me."

"Had she not some good reason for leaving you here alone?" asked her papa.

"I was angry because she would not let me stay longer in the garden, and so I would not answer her when she spoke to me," replied Mary, blushing deeply.

"You see, Mary," said her father, "how much trouble one fault may cause. You insisted upon staying in the garden longer than Susan thought best for you; then, because she would not allow it, you became angry, refused to answer her inquiries, and finally upset the table in a rage, breaking your doll and injuring your work-box and toys. Do you think your feelings are now any more pleasant than they would have been if you had cheerfully submitted to Susan's better judgment in the first place? I hope the shame and pain you now feel will be a lesson to you, and that you will keep a guard upon your temper in future." Saying this, he and her mamma left the room.

It was some time before Mary began to recover any portion of her cheerfulness; but after a while she became somewhat calm, and *almost* wished she had come into the house when Susan wished her to. At length, after picking up her doll and work-box, and other things, and putting them all in their proper places, she sat down to her mamma's writing-table, and taking up the pen, she scrawled over a sheet of paper, making all sorts of crooked

marks and figures. Had Mary been a good girl, instead of wasting time and paper in this way, she would have copied out her writing lesson neatly; thus she would have been doing her duty and learning to write at the same time.

But this foolish employment did not amuse her very long; she began to feel tired of staying in the nursery alone. So she went in search of Susan; but Susan was busy and could not attend to her. Then Mary went into the parlor, but her mamma was not there, and her papa looked grave, and did not welcome her as kindly as usual. All this vexed her, for she had yet to learn that goodness alone can make little girls happy. She now felt cross and angry because she was not happy, and thus became still more naughty than before.

After sitting down sulkily a few minutes, in silence, for her papa was reading the newspaper and did not talk with her, Mary went to the book-case and taking out one of her little books, began to look

at the pictures. Just then her mamma came down from her chamber, and Mary eagerly ran up to her with her book, saying,—

"Oh dear, mamma, I am so glad you have come. I want to have you tell me all about these pictures."

"I shall be happy to do so some other time, my dear," said her mamma, "but just now I am busy; besides, your papa is reading, and I fear we shall disturb him. You had better sit down and read one of these tales yourself, and by-and-by I will explain it all to you."

"But, mamma, I don't like to read," answered Mary; "I can not understand all these hard words, and it will take me a great while to read one of these stories through; I had much rather you would tell me about it."

"Then you must wait, my child," replied Mrs. Richmond, in a whisper; "so do not talk any more, for papa can not read while we are talking."

"But, mamma—" began Mary again.

"Mary!" said her mother, "not a word more."

The little wilful child sat down with her book, and began to pout and then to sob. Her father finally looked up from his paper and said—

"It is a fine day, Mary, and you had better go and take a run on the long gravel-walk. The sun shines bright, and the morning is quite pleasant."

"But I do not now want to go out, papa," said Mary; "besides, I think it is going to rain."

"No, Mary; there will be no rain at present, for I do not see any clouds. So get your hat and shawl. A few turns up and down the walk will do you good."

"But, papa, I don't wish to go out now; I had rather sit here and look at the pictures in my little Forget-me-not. Why must I go out when I don't like it?"

"First of all, Mary, because it is your duty to obey me; and next, because it is good for your health. So go at once, and the more cheerful you are, the more happy you will be."

Mary knew she must obey her father; so she went into the hall, leaving the parlor door open, and called from the bottom of the stairs to Susan, in a cross tone, to bring her bonnet and shawl.

'Come back again, Mary," said her papa, "and shut the door, and then go and get your things yourself."

Mary did as her father bade her, but with a bad grace; and having put on her bonnet and shawl, went out; but instead of running up and down the gravel walk, she stood still, or only walked as slow as she could, saying to herself, "O, how tedious this is! I wish papa would let me stay in the house. I don't see why he wants me to run up and down

here. I am sure it is too bad." She had just begun to cry, when she saw her mamma coming towards her, along the walk.

"Why, Mary," said she, "why do you cry? are you not well?"

"I don't know, mamma. I'm sad and tired, and I don't want to stay out here."

"I am afraid, Mary, you have not yet got rid of your bad feelings. Come, now, let us try what a run will do; which will get to the apple tree first, you or I?"

"You run, mamma!" said Mary, in surprise; "I thought you were too old to run. You are a great lady, too!"

"Not too great a lady to run with you, my dear; nor quite too old yet; and as the air is rather cool, and I have come out without a hat or shawl, a short run will keep me warm. Come, I'll set off, and you must try to catch me."

But Mary having made up her mind not to run, did not like to give up her point.

"Well," said her mamma, "if you can not run, I must take hold of your hand and help you along; I suppose you have stood here till you don't know how to move."

And Mrs. Richmond half led, half pulled, the little girl as far as the apple-tree and back again. Her mamma's good humor and kindness brought Mary around by degrees, and she began to lose her ill-temper. As they ran up and down the walk, she thought it quite pleasant to have her mamma to play with her. She soon forgot how angry she was when she first came out, and she ran and laughed as if she had never been unhappy. Once, as she was trying to run before her mamma, she

stumbled and fell, before her mamma could prevent her, and, although she received a pretty severe bruise on her chin, yet she was too happy to mind it at all.

"You are not tired and sad now, Mary," said Mrs. Richmond, as they stopped to rest.

"No, mamma, not at all," answered Mary.

"You had only to run about, in order to get rid of these feelings. Our own bad tempers are worse and more painful than either fatigue, cold, or hunger. We should never allow them to get the better of us; they lead us into much evil, and make us sad when we might be happy. Look around you; what a bright clear sky; what a nice dry path; what a pleasant home. There is nothing here to vex or annoy you. Come with me now down to the road, and see the children at Hobson's cottage; they have little more than the necessaries of life; their father is not able to procure them so many luxuries as you enjoy."

They then walked down to the road-side where they could see the cottage. Just at that time, in front of it stood a man with a box of singing birds which he was offering for sale. He had one on his finger, which was quite tame. Two of Hobson's children were at his side, laughing and talking as merry as could be; one little girl, about the age of Mary, was looking out of the window and listening to the singing of the birds, seemingly as much pleased as the others.

"Now, Mary," said Mrs. Richmond, "you see no sad faces here. These children all appear much happier than you have been this morning, although they possess few of the comforts which you enjoy every day of your life. A cheerful temper makes us all able to bear great evils. In spite of all the comforts you enjoy, you are cross and unhappy, while these poor children, with barely enough food and clothes, are quite contented."

"But, mamma," said Mary, "I do not know what

to do, for the naughty feelings come, and drive away the good ones."

"But, Mary, if you were now to see a pond of water before you, would you walk into it?"

"'Oh no, mamma," said Mary.

'And if you were to see a bee about to sting you, would you not drive it away?"

"Why certainly I should, mamma."

"Then, my dear, when you are going to do what is wrong, *think*, and avoid it as you would the pond of water; and when you are going to fret and be cross because you can not do just as you wish, *think*, and drive away the cross feelings, as you would the bee, for this fretting, and these cross feelings will give you much more pain than a great many stings."

"Indeed, mamma, I will try," said Mary, "for I know that these feelings make me very unhappy."

Mrs. Richmond then called to the man who had the birds to sell, to come across the road and show them. When Mary saw the little songsters, s'he was delighted, and cried out, "Oh, mamma, do buy one of the sweet little canarys for me; pray do.'

"I am afraid, my dear, you will let it suffer for want of care and attention. Besides, Mary, I hardly think you deserve a favor after such a morning as this."

Mary blushed deeply and hung down her head, unable to say a word.

"You have promised me, Mary," said Mrs. Richmond, after a moment's pause, "to strive to become good. I wish to encourage you in your resolution. I will, therefore, give you one of these sweet birds; but remember,—the first time you break this promise, I shall take the bird away and give it to little Annette Hobson."

"Oh, mamma, I will take great care of it," said Mary, "and I will behave so well that you will not have to take it away."

"I hope so, my dear; but time will show how long you are to be its mistress."

Having allowed Mary to select a bird from the great variety in the box, Mrs. Richmond directed the man to procure a handsome cage for it, and then take it to the house. Mary was delighted with the idea of owning such a beautiful bird, and the condition upon which she was allowed to do so, gave her but little uneasiness. She thought she could easily keep a guard upon her temper, and would always be as cheerful and happy as she was now. Alas! no; our bad dispositions require the utmost care and vigilance to control them, after they are once formed.

As soon as Mary and her mother reached home, she went to her papa, and told him that she was a

good girl ; that her mamma had bought her a beautiful canary, and that she had promised to be always good. He kissed her, and said he was glad to hear she was good, and he hoped she would be able to keep her promise.

In about an hour, the man came with the cage and bird. Mr. Richmond had the cage placed on a stand near the door, and Mary carried out her little stool and work-baskest, and sat down by it, that she might hear the bird sing. But she was too much pleased to attend to any thing else. She could not sit still, and was constantly jumping up, that she might see as well as hear her little favorite. Time thus passed off rapidly, and before Mary was aware of it, her dinner hour arrived, and Susan came to call her. Mary went in at once, although she did not like to leave her bird so soon ; but she thought of her promise. After she had finished her dinner, she went into the parlor, where she found a lady and gentleman, with a little girl about her own

age, who had come to dine with her papa and mamma. As Mary had already dined, when the party were about to go into the dining-room her mamma called Susan to take care of Mary till the desert was served.

"Mamma, I'm hungry," said Mary.

"Not very, I think, Mary," said her mother. "as it is not long since you dined."

"But I should like to dine with you."

"No, Mary," said Mrs. Richmond; "two dinners would not agree with you."

"Pray do, mamma, let me dine with you," said Mary; "I should like it so very much."

"No, Mary; I have said no, and I mean no."

"Pray, mamma," Mary again began.

"Susan," said Mrs. Richmond, "take Mary out of the room; I am sorry she does not behave well enough to remain here."

Mary began to cry; and as she was going up stairs, she screamed so loud and tried so hard to

pull away from Susan, that her mamma left the dinner-table, and, taking Mary by the hand, put her in a closet by herself, where her crying could not be heard. She then shut and locked the door, and went down stairs. Mary cried louder than ever, kicked at the door, and called Susan and her mother to let her out; but no one came near her. At length, tired of screaming, she sat down on a box, which stood on the floor of the closet. She then began to think of all her mamma had said to her, of her beautiful bird, and of how much she had lost by being naughty, and how little she had gained.

She was very sad and lonely; she had nothing to do; nothing to look at; and no one to talk to. Had she been a good child, she would have played about till dinner was over; then she would have gone into the dining-room and eaten some fruit; and after that she could have taken her little visitor to see her bird, and could have gone with her to the beautiful arbor in the garden, where her parents and their visitors went directly after dinner. It was a beautiful little summer-house, at the bottom of the gravel-walk, and Mr. and Mrs. Richmond often took their visitors there in pleasant weather. At such times, if there were any children in the party, they amused themselves with Mary, in playing among the vines and shrubbery that surrounded it. Had Mary been good, she would have enjoyed all this, and more than all, her papa and mamma, with their friends, would have thought well of her; but now she was in disgrace with them all. The tears rolled down her cheeks, but she did not scream, for these were tears of grief, not anger. The thought of her dear bird, which she knew would be taken from her, caused these tears to flow still faster.

At length the door was opened by her mother, who led her into the parlor, and seating herself on the sofa, said to her, "Mary, as you have ceased screaming, I have taken you out of the closet. Have you any thing to say to me, for your bad conduct, before you go to bed?"

"I am very sorry, mamma," said Mary, "that I have been so naughty. I will try to do better."

"You told me so this morning; but you have not kept your word. I have kept mine, and have sent your bird over to Annette Hobson. I am sorry I can not trust what you say."

Mary sobbed aloud when she heard that the bird was gone; but she knew she deserved it all, and she could not say a word. Just then her papa came in, and after looking at her a moment, said—

"So this is the way you have kept the promise you made this morning, Mary! You surely can not expect us to place much reliance on your promises after this."

"I don't know what to say," said Mary; "I wish to be good, indeed I do; and I think I shall grow good now, for I am more unhappy than I ever was before."

"I do hope," said her mother, "that you will be good after this, for I believe you are sorry. Go to bed now, but before you sleep, think how you may best learn to obey me and keep your temper." She then kissed her, but her face was grave, and she looked very sad indeed.

Mary blushed deeply, as she bade her father and mother, and the little girl, "good afternoon," and then she went up to her bed. When she laid her head on her pillow, it was not quite sundown. She thought over all the events of the day, and she said, "This has been a sad, sad day; I have not been happy because I have not been good. Oh, dear, how much, how very much I have suffered by being a naughty girl."

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